

City Projects UPDATE

CITY OF ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

WINTER 2001



An artist's rendering of the expanded City Hall. The new entrance would face Maryland Ave. rather than Vinson St.

City Hall Expansion Allows Continued Quality Service

In 1962, Rockville City Hall was built to accommodate 60 employees. It was expanded 20 years later to increase that number to 142. Today, the building houses more than 200 employees, not including two of the City's larger divisions, which had to be moved off-site because of a lack of space.

"Suffice it to say that conditions at City Hall are cramped with almost no space for storage," said Mayor Rose Krasnow. "Cubicles have been set up in every available nook and cranny, and offices that were meant to hold one or two employees now seat three or four. In addition, because of its age, City Hall is technologically obsolete. This is making it increasingly difficult to take advantage of the many things that technology can do for us."

To alleviate these conditions, the City is in the process of designing a new 34,000-square-foot wing that will be connected to the existing 53,000-square-foot building. The project also will include renovations to the current City Hall.

"The Mayor and Council believe the expansion of City Hall is absolutely necessary if we wish to continue to provide the same high quality level service to our citizens," said Krasnow. "The improved facilities will ensure that one-stop shopping for citizen and business services will continue."

When the project is completed, additional meeting spaces for the City's many boards and commissions, task forces, and other citizen groups will be provided. Two conference rooms also will have modern technological advantages such as enhanced audiovisual features for presentations.

The renovated and expanded City Hall will be built with modern, flexible workspaces that can be readily altered to accommodate changes in the makeup of the workforce in future years. This is necessary as the city

population grows. The new building will accommodate 260 employees – the number that is expected to be necessary for the estimated population growth of Rockville.

The added space also will allow the

"City Hall is one of the most important civic buildings in any city... We want ours to be a place that welcomes and accommodates the needs of all Rockville residents."

City to bring the Community Services division and the Contract Management division back to City Hall. In addition, departments that interact will be located near each other making the building more user friendly for both citizens and employees.

Other improvements include repositioning the entrance of City Hall so that it faces Maryland Ave. (rather than Vinson St., where the back of the future District Court will be). Increased security and more efficient energy systems also are planned.

Architects should complete the conceptual design, basic footprint, and interior layout this summer.

Watch future issues of *Rockville Reports*, *The Rockville Channel*, the City's Web site (www.ci.rockville.md.us), and your mail for information about open houses and public input opportunities in early 2001.

"City Hall is one of the most important civic buildings in any city," said Krasnow. "We want ours to be a place that welcomes and accommodates the needs of all Rockville residents." ■

CALL 301-315-6507 FOR MORE INFO

City Works to Tackle Current and Future Town Center Parking Needs

The Mayor and Council have been working with residents for the past several years to identify a new vision for Rockville's Town Center and to see that this new vision comes to fruition. The creation of a downtown that will be "alive after five" is now underway, but one of the most difficult challenges that has arisen has been keeping up with the demand for parking.

"If we want to attract and retain office and retail uses, adequate parking is absolutely necessary," said Mayor Rose Krasnow. "Since Rockville is the County seat, we also must ensure that we have enough parking for government and court employees. Finally, we know parking must be readily available if we hope to attract our own residents and visitors to Town Center."

In 1999, Montgomery County and the City commissioned a study of current and future parking demands in Town Center. This study projected that there will be a deficit of more than 2,400 parking spaces within the next 10 years.

"Clearly this is a serious problem," continued Krasnow. "Among other things, a lack of public parking will result in commuters and Town Center visitors parking on nearby residential streets."

As the new library and Foulger-Pratt sites are developed, 75 percent of the existing 763 surface parking spaces in that area will be eliminated. To complicate things further, in 1971, Montgomery County paid for 270 parking spaces for 40 years in the former mall parking garage, which was demolished as part of the Town Center redevelopment effort. The City is still obligated to provide the County with these spaces through the year 2011. Currently this parking is being provided at the Foulger-Pratt site, but once construction begins, that land will no longer be available. Until the Town Center garage is built, which is several years away, the City may be faced with a short-term situation where there is little public parking during business hours on weekdays.

"We are working with the County and State to find viable options to solve both short and long-term parking needs," said Krasnow.

In addition, the State and County will be contributing significant funds to the needed parking facilities, greatly reducing the cost burden on Rockville taxpayers.

The major expense will be the construction of an approximately 950 space

parking garage adjacent to the proposed library between Middle Ln. and Beall Ave. However, more parking still will be necessary, so a surface lot has been proposed for a tract of land owned by Montgomery County on Fleet St., between Maryland Ave. and Monroe St.

"If we want to attract and retain office and retail uses, adequate parking is absolutely necessary."

This lot would go a long way toward relieving the impending parking crunch. Even when designed with extensive landscaping and buffers, the lot could hold approximately 375 vehicles. After the construction of the new District Court, this parking lot would be used for court parking. Until then, it would be used to accommodate County parking once construction of the Foulger-Pratt building begins, and City parking once construction of the expanded City Hall begins.

As a result of resident concerns about the proposed surface parking lot, the County has agreed to study the possibility of expanding the existing County Office Building garage or building a new structured garage on the current juror's lot on Rt. 28 and Monroe St. The City also is reconsidering the option of building a structured garage onsite to handle the additional parking that will be required for the planned expansion of City Hall.

"We have almost started over, putting a wide variety of options on the table to determine whether a better alternative can be found," said Krasnow. "However, the entire issue is complicated by the fact that any solution must be supported by three governmental jurisdictions. In addition to aesthetic concerns, we must consider the cost, the immediate short-term need for parking, and future parking needs. It is uncertain at this time what the outcome will be."

As the City continues to work to find a solution to this situation, the Mayor and Council would like to stress their interest in hearing and addressing citizen concerns.

Installation of Parking Meters

In an effort to aid in the parking situation, this spring, parking meters will be

Continued on pg. 3...

City Projects

Recreation and Parks

Hungerford/Stoneridge Elwood Smith Comm. Center

General renovations and accessibility upgrades to be made • a room also will be added • construction to begin in May with completion in early September • *the.chat.room* will relocate for May and June

Dawson Farm Park

The City is converting the Ritchie Pkwy. dead-end to greenspace • the project will include: art, historical signs, improvements to granary foundation, and changes to the on-site stormwater management facility • Construction is expected to occur in spring '01

West End Skate Park

Asphalt, fencing, and removal of racquetball practice walls in progress • equipment (ramps, rails, pipes, etc.) scheduled to be installed in April '01 • it is scheduled to open in May '01

Twinbrook Street Tree Replacement

This multi-year project is ongoing • it includes removing and replacing trees that have been deemed hazardous, are in major decline, or have been severely damaged by utilities

General Projects Millennium Trail

Phase I of the project is underway • this includes the trail on Wootton Pkwy. from Falls Rd. to Glen Mill Rd. • the design of Phase II of the project also is underway • it will be located on Norbeck Rd. from Gude Dr. to Wootton Pkwy. • \$1.5 million in TEA-21 funding awarded

Nature Center

The center is to be located at Rockville Civic Center Park • the design of the center is complete and a grant for its construction has been received • a bid was awarded in January • construction is scheduled to begin in March

I-270/Rt. 28 Bike/Pedestrian Bridge

This project currently is in the design stage • a citizen taskforce is being formed to aid in the project

Beall-Dawson Historical Park

The project includes replacing the steps from N. Adams St. to the sidewalk in accordance with the Historical Landscape

and Master Plan Study • the project is underway

Playground Equipment Improvements

The City is replacing equipment at Lone Oak and Welsh Parks during winter and spring '01

Parks Topographical, Tree, and Boundary Survey

The project will update the topographical data for parks and grounds in the Rock Creek watershed • the information gathered will provide for improved planning, asset inventory, and maintenance • the surveying will take place throughout winter and spring '01

Municipal Swim Center

The City is investigating expanding the center • current plans include adding new meeting space, a classroom, and an expanded fitness area • the feasibility and concept design is underway

City Hall Expansion

The project includes the construction of a new wing and renovations to the existing building to accommodate overcrowding and future staff • the plan includes a new entrance to be located on Maryland Ave. • the project will allow for technology and energy upgrades • as part of the project, the creation of additional parking on the corner of Fleet St. and Maryland Ave. is being studied • the project is in the design and engineering phase • construction is expected to occur in fiscal year '02

Energy Performance and Equipment Improvement Study

The focus of the study is the major City facilities • the study will include energy audits, system performance, equipment replacement/upgrades, maintenance operations, and energy savings • the goal of the study is to provide highly efficient, functional, and energy efficient mechanical systems • this is a multi-year project

Park Land Acquisition Fund

The fund establishes a master plan for the potential acquisition of private lands adjacent to public parks or in environmentally sensitive areas • it may entail purchasing easements or purchase of land • it is an on-going project

CALL 301-309-3330 FOR MORE INFO



Glenview Mansion, located at Rockville Civic Center Park, has been called the jewel of the city.

Glenview Mansion Master Plan Developed

In April 2000, work began on the Glenview Mansion Historic Master Plan, which will develop recommendations for the continued long-term preservation and enhancement of the historic resources of the mansion and its grounds.

The plan is being developed by a consultant, John Milner Associates, in conjunction with the: Recreation and Park Advisory Board; Cultural Arts Commission; Historic District Commission; and Mansion Docents. Input from residents also is being sought and will be incorporated into the plan.

At this time, the data collection and research phase of the project is substantially complete. This includes all physical attributes, such as buildings, landscaping, traffic flow, etc. as they pertain to the historic nature of the mansion and the surrounding grounds. Also included in this data-gathering phase has been an examination of current uses as well as a collection of historical documentation from aerial photos, archival maps and plats, and written histories of the Bowie and Lyon families, who owned Glenview Mansion.

Currently, the City's consultants are in the process of presenting preliminary findings to each of the interested groups, and obtaining input from them on issues, background, and general thoughts.

In January, the consultants made a presentation to residents in which they explained the background and usage of the Civic Center, the mission, and the direction that the master plan is anticipated to take.

The next phase of the Glenview Mansion Historic Master Plan includes research and examination of other similar facilities with both historical and varied adoptive-use interests. With that done, the consultant will combine all this information into a working draft plan. That draft will contain the consultant's findings, backgrounds of past and present uses and issues, and a series of recommendations for continued preservation and site improvements. It is estimated that this draft will be ready for review and comment in February.

A final plan, incorporating comments from all participants, will then be generated for presentation to the public at an open house. Comments from the public will be incorporated, and the final draft of the recommended plan will be presented to the Mayor and Council at a work session. ■

CALL 301-309-3001 FOR MORE INFO

Croydon Creek Nature Center Construction to Begin

Nature lovers get ready! Construction of the Croydon Creek Nature Center, to be located at the Rockville Civic Center Park, is scheduled to commence in March 2001. The center should be open by the summer of 2001.

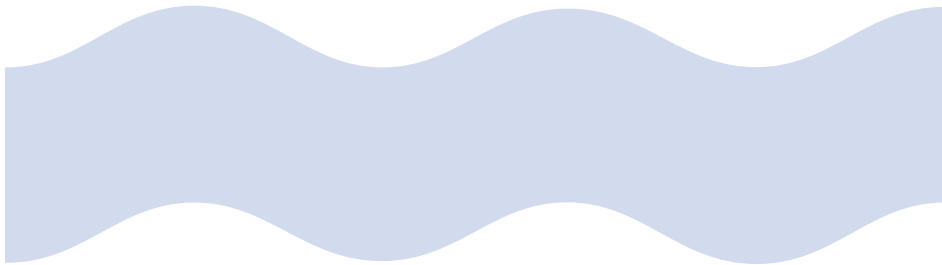
When completed, the nature center will be open to the general public as well as to school groups, scout troops, and special interest groups. It will offer visitors insight into nature in an urban setting. Displays, classes, and special events will highlight the importance of our natural resources and how to protect them.

A committee of residents helped design the 8,000-square-foot center, and the City is dedicated to having the best possible programs available.

Work on the center, which was expected to begin in 2000, was delayed due to grant funding from the Recreational Trail Program of the State Highway Administration.

Watch for more information about the Croydon Creek Nature Center in future issues of *Rockville Reports* and on *The Rockville Channel*. ■

CALL 301-309-3340 FOR MORE INFO



City Projects

Public Works



The new traffic and pedestrian signals placed on Wootton Pkwy. make the road safer for pedestrians and bikers.

Wootton Pkwy. Projects Planned to Improve Thoroughfare

Wootton Pkwy. is one of the City's main thoroughfares, and as Rockville continues to grow, the City is striving to make the parkway safe and useable for pedestrians and bikers, as well as drivers. As a result, numerous projects have been undertaken or are on the books for the future.

One of the first projects on Wootton Pkwy. occurred last fall and included the placement of traffic signals at the southern entrance of Wootton High School and a pedestrian signal at the Rockshire shopping center.

Another project that is currently underway is the development of the Millennium Bike Trail. This will be located from Falls Rd. to Darnestown Rd. Residents should expect to see construction alongside the road as weather permits work to occur.

In the next 18 months, the City also will begin realigning of the parkway and Glen Mill Rd. Currently drivers must use Glen Mill Rd. to get to Darnestown Rd. from Wootton Pkwy. When the project is completed, Glen Mill Rd. will "T" into Wootton Pkwy. This project is in the design phase.

After the realignment, the next project on Wootton Pkwy. will be an expansion project that is slated for Fiscal Year 2002. The project will begin with the planning and preliminary design work for widening Wootton Pkwy. from two to four lanes between Hurley Ave. and Scott Dr. Depending on the configuration, this project should begin in two to three years

"The first phase of this project will include meeting with affected homeowners and interested parties," said Larry Marcus, the City's Chief of Transportation. "We want to work with the community to design a parkway that enhances pedestrian and bike usage as well as handles increased traffic."

The next part of this project will include widening the remaining section of Wootton Pkwy. from Falls Rd. to Darnestown Rd. This project will take place in the next six to 10 years.

"As the widening of Wootton Pkwy. takes place, the Mayor and Council and City staff want to be good listeners," said Marcus. "It is our goal to complete this project in a very neighborhood sensitive manner."

Watch future issues of *Rockville Reports* and *The Rockville Channel* for more information on these projects as they develop. In addition, starting in July, residents should check the City's Web site at www.ci.rockville.md.us for regular updates on the many numerous Wootton Pkwy. projects. ■

CALL **301-309-3220** FOR MORE INFO

Town Center Parking, from pg. 1

placed in Town Center that will restrict parking to two hours during weekday business hours.

"These on-street meters are necessary to provide turnover in parking traffic for businesses and retail stores in Town Center," said Terry Treschuk, director of Rockville's Department of Public Safety, Neighborhood, and Community Services. "We don't want our on-street parking spaces filled all day by people who are commuters or who are spending the day at the courthouse. We need to keep traffic moving in and out of this area so that businesses can benefit."

The meters will be placed in Town Center on Courthouse Sq. and Monroe Pl. – the area circling around the courthouse system and Regal Theaters.

The City will embark on a marketing program to make residents aware of the coming parking meters. Watch future issues of *Rockville Reports*, *The Rockville Channel*, and the City's Web site (www.ci.rockville.md.us). ■

CALL **301-309-3242** FOR MORE INFO

Lincoln Park Ashley Ave.-Lincoln Park Drainage Improvements

A collector pipe will be installed along the south side of Ashley Ave. to which residents may connect their own sump pump discharge pipes • the goal of the project is to reduce standing water in back yards and to generally improve drainage conditions for the neighborhood along this street • construction of the collector pipe will occur in spring 2001

Town Center Maryland Ave. Extension

The City prepared the roadway design specifications to extend Maryland Ave. from Middle Ln. to Beall Ave. • design started in January

East Rockville Horners Lane Water Tank

The City will remove the tank in spring 2001 prior to the start of the Highland Rd. project • the Department of Recreation and Parks is working with the surrounding neighborhoods to determine the use of the land

West End Great Falls Road Project

The project will improve the safety and appearance of the road from Monument St. to W. Montgomery Ave. • it includes an 8-foot bike path, curb and gutter, and safety improvements • prior to road construction in April, a water line relining project will be completed

General Projects Chapman Ave. Water Main

The goal of this project is to strengthen our water distribution system and improve "fire flows" • the water main on Chapman Ave. will be replaced in summer 2001

Jefferson St. Water Main

The goal of this project is to strengthen our water distribution system and improve "fire flows" • the water main on Jefferson St. will be replaced in summer 2001

Baltimore Road

After two meetings with residents and extensive field work, a concept plan was presented to residents in late January • the plan will address adding on-street parking, curb and gutter, traffic calming measures, and bike path sidewalk facilities on the road between First St. and Broadwood Dr.

Falls Road Bikeway

Construction of the bike path, from Wootton Pkwy. to Dunster Rd., is nearly complete • as soon as weather permits, the City will lay a final layer of asphalt, erect fences in some areas, and landscape in select locations

Wootton Pkwy. Widening

Starting in 2002, City staff will begin evaluating the next stage of widening Wootton Pkwy. from Hurley Ave. to Scott Dr. • staff will evaluate travel demand, establish citizen work groups, and begin design work • the project limits may vary as a result of the study • resident input will be sought and incorporated into the project

Brick Sidewalks in Historic District

• Preparing contract for award • the City expects the work to start as soon as a contract is awarded in spring '01

Asphalt Maintenance

Most of the work scheduled for 2001 will be in the area west of I-270 • specific streets to be scheduled will be advertised in the spring • project will commence in July and run through September

Concrete Maintenance

Work on this on-going project is currently underway in the Twinbrook and Fallsmead/Lower Rockshire areas • in 2001, the majority of work on this project will occur in the area south of Wootton Pkwy. and between I-270 and the railroad.

Street Lighting Improvements

Citywide project • several lighting projects are under review to be constructed during the spring • this includes: Dundee St. improvements; Beall Ave. improvements between Van Buren St. and Forest Ave.; and reconditioning and painting street light poles on Tower Oaks Blvd.

Neighborhood Traffic Control

The City is revising the Traffic Calming Policy and will prioritize the traffic calming requests in 2001 • the construction of the two new signals at Wootton Parkway was completed in September '00

CALL **301-309-3220** FOR MORE INFO

Work on Skate Park Underway

After some delays caused by bidding problems and increased costs, construction of the City's Skate Park at Welsh Park is now underway. Currently the City is removing the practice racquetball walls and preparing to lay asphalt as soon as weather permits.

The delays were the result of bids coming in well over the proposed budget. Because of these unexpected prices, the City worked with residents and potential users to redesign the park.

Instead of the originally proposed concrete skate park, the park now will include equipment such as ramps, bowls, rails, fun boxes, etc. It also will have a new asphalt surface, new fencing, and a small building for staff to supervise the park.

The Skate Park at Welsh Park will provide a supervised, safe, and modern area for residents who participate in inline skating, skateboarding, and free-style biking.

The equipment should be installed by April 2001, and the park is slated to open on May 1. Watch future issues of *Rockville Reports* and *The Rockville Channel* for updates. ■

CALL 301-309-3341 FOR MORE INFO

Elwood Smith Comm. Center Renovations Planned

Renovations to the Elwood Smith Community Center are in the works, and when completed, the center will have a new meeting room, added storage space, bathroom renovations, and a new roof. In addition, the center's existing computer room will be enhanced.

Final bids for the Elwood Smith Community Center project have been received, and the City awarded the project in January. If all goes as planned, construction of the center is scheduled to begin in May. The City estimates that the work will be completed in early September.

The renovations will bring the building into compliance with ADA and other codes, and provide space to accommodate the after-school program that is based at the center as well as increased use requests. The finished product also will prove to be useful to future Recreation and Parks Department programs.

This project is supported by the Hungerford/Stoneridge Civic Association, activists, and current users. ■

CALL 301-309-3341 FOR MORE INFO

Mayor and Council Approve King Farm Park/Elementary School

King Farm residents will soon have a place to play. In late December 2000, the Mayor and Council approved the plans for the King Farm Park. The City has been working with residents to design and create the park.

Work is slated to begin in February or early March depending on the severity of winter weather, and it should take approximately six to eight months to complete. It will, however, take a full year for the grass to fill in and for other landscaping, including trees and bushes, to become established.

- When completed, the park will include:
- ballfields;
 - playgrounds;
 - pathways;
 - passive space;
 - tennis courts;
 - basketball courts; and
 - art work (as part of the Arts in Public Places program)

The King Farm Park is 75 percent supported by the Maryland Program Open Space.

Part of the park site is planned to include an elementary school. When built, it will be operated and maintained by Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). The school is not yet scheduled for construction by MCPS.

All other park areas – about nine of the total 12 acres – will be owned and maintained by the City.

The park was scheduled to be built in 2000, but because final costs came in several thousand dollars above the original budget of the project, it was delayed. ■

CALL 301-309-3300 FOR MORE INFO



The Elwood Smith Community Center in January 2001. When renovations are complete, it will have a new meeting room, added storage, renovated bathrooms, and a new roof.



Bike signs, such as this one, have been placed along the many bike paths and lanes that exist in Rockville. It is the City's goal to make Rockville "bike friendly."

Rockville Bikeway Master Plan Moves Forward

As the Bikeway Master Plan continues to be fulfilled, it is getting easier for residents to put on their helmets, grab their water bottles, and get on their bikes to get around town.

Implementation of the plan is fully underway with the help of Transportation Efficiency Act (TEA-21) funding. Bike route signs have been installed on most of Rockville's streets that are identified as good roads for biking. Striped bike lanes also have been added to Hurley Ave., Nelson St., and College Pkwy. These roads will serve as connecting routes to regional bike paths and to downtown Rockville.

Work continues on the Millennium Trail, which is a 10-mile bike path that travels along Wootton Pkwy., Gude Dr., and Norbeck Rd. When completed, this path will connect cyclists to regional bike paths and neighborhoods to schools and shopping. Phase I of the trail is a 2.5-mile segment that will run parallel to Wootton Pkwy. It will be constructed this spring.

Phase II is a two-mile segment that will run parallel to Norbeck Rd. from E. Gude Dr. to Veirs Mill Rd. This phase has received TEA-21 funding, and it will be constructed in spring 2002.

Another bikeway project on the horizon is the design of a safe bike/pedestrian crossing on I-270 at Rt. 28. A public meeting will be conducted this winter to review the options for this project and to get public input before proceeding. Watch for more information in future issues of *Rockville Reports* and on *The Rockville Channel*. This project also will be submitted for grant funding.

In addition to the many bikeways that are in construction, convenient and safe locations for bike parking are always being considered. Residents are urged to contact the City's bikeway coordinator at 301-315-5796 if they have suggestions for improving bike facilities in Rockville. ■

CALL 301-315-5796 FOR MORE INFO

Important City of Rockville Phone Numbers

Here are some important City of Rockville numbers that you might want to cut out and stick on the refrigerator for later reference:

Emergency Water/Sewer	301-309-3093
Emergency Public Works Maintenance	301-309-3020
Neighborhood Services	301-309-3115
Parks Administration	301-309-3330
Public Works Administration	301-309-3220
Public Works Operations	301-309-3010
Public Works Utilities	301-309-3022
Refuse/Recycling	301-309-3094
Tree Maintenance Requests	301-309-3033
Water Treatment Plant	301-309-3080

DON'T FORGET!!!
Rockville University 2001 Session
Begins February 22, Call 301-309-3247.